



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

***UGANDA – Complex Emergency***

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

March 18, 2004

*Note: The last situation report was dated October 21, 2003.*

**BACKGROUND**

Since 1986, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, has waged an insurgency in northern Uganda, primarily using camps in southern Sudan as a base for attacks on government forces and civilians. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), LRA attacks have displaced more than 80 percent of the ethnic Acholi population in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts. LRA tactics to brutalize Ugandan civilians include looting, burning houses, torture, mutilation, and abduction of children for the purposes of forced conscription, forced labor, and sexual servitude. Prior to April 2002, northern Uganda enjoyed 18 months of relative stability. However, continued LRA attacks and improving relations between Uganda and Sudan, led the Government of Uganda (GOU) to launch ‘Operation Iron Fist’ in March 2002. Through an agreement with the Government of Sudan (GOS), the GOU sent 10,000 Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) troops to disable LRA camps in southern Sudan. As a result of this operation, LRA forces entered northern and eastern Uganda, attacking villages, assaulting camps for internally displaced people (IDPs), and exacerbating the humanitarian emergency.

During 2003 and early 2004, the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda deteriorated dramatically. LRA attacks expanded from the Acholi districts of Kitgum, Gulu, and Pader into Lira, Apac, Kaberamaido, Katakwi, and Soroti districts of Langi and Teso regions in eastern Uganda. The escalating civil conflict and violence directed towards civilians combined with looting and cattle raids by Karamojong pastoralists in eastern Uganda have resulted in Uganda’s worst humanitarian crisis in 18 years. According to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), nearly 1.4 million Ugandans have fled their homes and live without shelter or in camps. Many IDP camps lack adequate protection, sanitation facilities, and health care, leaving displaced Ugandans vulnerable to further LRA attacks and to disease. The conflict threatens food security, even in normally productive agricultural areas, and continued insecurity hinders the ability of relief workers to provide humanitarian assistance and deliver relief commodities. As the scale of the conflict widened during 2003, LRA child abductions increased. The U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF) estimates that the LRA abducted 8,500 Ugandan children in 2003, in addition to approximately 20,000 abducted between 1986 and 2003. A significant number of northern Ugandans, especially children seeking protection from abduction, have become night commuters, traveling each evening from vulnerable rural communities to spend the night in the perceived safety of urban centers.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
<b>Internally Displaced Persons</b>	1,397,899	WFP (February 2004)
<b>Refugees in Uganda</b>	207,654	UN OCHA (December 2003)
<b>Ugandan Refugees</b>	Total: 20,000 10,000 in the DRC 5,000 in Sudan 5,000 in Kenya	U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR)

**Total FY 2004 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Uganda..... \$3,991,053**  
**Total FY 2004 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Uganda .....\$28,564,483**

**CURRENT SITUATION**

***Peace process remains stalled; LRA violence continues.*** Areas of northern and eastern Uganda remain insecure due to continued LRA brutality against civilian populations. Fear of attack continues to force vulnerable Ugandans into IDP camps, which are largely unprotected. According to UN OCHA, on February 5, members of the LRA, dressed as UPDF soldiers, entered the Abia IDP camp, near the town of Lira, and

killed approximately 50 residents. IDP witnesses reported that between 300 and 350 armed combatants attacked the camp. Many of the IDPs relocated to other camps in Lira District following the attack, which came less than one week after the UPDF searched Pabbo camp in Gulu District to arrest suspected LRA collaborators. International media reports indicate that a fire destroyed 4,000 homes during a UPDF operation

*USAID/OFDA bulletins can be obtained from the USAID web site at*  
[http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/disaster\\_assistance/countries/fy2004\\_index.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/countries/fy2004_index.html)

in Pabbo, the country's largest IDP camp. According to UN OCHA, the UPDF detained 6,000 suspected collaborators during the incursion.

On February 21, according to UN OCHA, the LRA attacked the Barlonyo IDP camp in Lira district, home to nearly 4,000 Ugandans. Again dressed as UPDF soldiers, the LRA burned the camp, attacked civilians with guns and machetes, and killed more than 200 people. WFP has distributed 40 MT of food assistance to the survivors in Ogur, 5 km from Barlonya camp. On February 25, approximately 10,000 people in Lira marched to protest LRA violence and the UPDF's inability to end the conflict. International media sources reported that some marchers began burning homes and threatening the town's Acholi people, who many associate with the LRA. UN OCHA reported that five people were killed during the violence.

WFP estimates 902,000 IDPs live in the Acholi sub-region, 370,000 in the Teso sub-region, and 82,000 in the Lango sub-region. Unconfirmed reports suggest that the recent escalation of the conflict in the area has resulted in the displacement of an additional 297,000 residents in the rural areas of northern Lira and Apac districts in Lango sub-region.

***Insecurity restricts humanitarian access.*** According to USAID/OFDA, the most difficult challenge for relief workers is poor access to IDPs due to insecurity. Access remains restricted in the Acholi and Teso regions due to LRA attacks, and convoys of relief commodities are vulnerable to ambush. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reports that humanitarian access to approximately 20 camps around Lira is severely restricted. Despite lack of access, local GOU officials estimate between 200,000 and 300,000 IDPs in the Lira area. People living outside the camps have inadequate access to food, water, and health care and are more vulnerable to LRA attacks.

The international media has reported that the GOU announced plans on March 11 to consolidate IDPs into larger, more concentrated camps, in response to recent LRA attacks. Currently most of Uganda's 42 IDP camps house 4,000 to 5,000 people, but the GOU plans to regroup IDPs into 20 larger camps that house an estimated 20,000 each. Media reports have indicated some UN concerns that more congested camps will reduce health and sanitation standards.

***Deteriorating sanitation and health situation in IDP camps.*** The availability and proper use of latrines is limited and many IDP camps have inadequate sources of potable water. Although some camps have functioning boreholes, the pumps break down frequently and the lines to fetch water are often long. As a result, most IDPs rely on contaminated surface

water or unprotected springs. These poor sanitation conditions along with a general lack of access to health care facilities have resulted in an adverse health situation for most IDPs. Infant mortality is as high as 290 out of 1,000 births in some areas of northern Uganda. District health units provide limited health services in some camps, but local staff is reluctant to work due to insecurity and poor working conditions.

***Continuing food insecurity in northern Uganda.***

According to a February 10 USAID Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) report, households in northern Uganda continue to experience moderate to high levels of food insecurity in contrast to the rest of the country. Fields in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts are marginally attended due to continued attacks. Additionally, insecurity along major transit routes has disrupted shipping, decreased the availability of goods, and increased prices in the markets. Most northern households have exhausted coping mechanisms and are dependant on emergency food assistance. WFP food distributions target more than 1.9 million people in Uganda, including the 1.4 million IDPs. IDPs in Gulu District are able to meet only 25 percent of their food needs, and WFP supplements this by providing the balance of 65 percent of the daily minimum requirement. However, many beneficiaries of food assistance indicated that these rations are not adequate to sustain them.

***High levels of malnutrition among IDPs.*** Due to reduced agricultural output, high unemployment, poor conditions in the IDP camps, inadequate access to potable water, poor diet, and insufficient food rations, malnutrition is increasing in northern Uganda, particularly among IDP children. Initial reports from recent nutritional surveys conducted by WFP, UNICEF, the International Medical Corps (IMC), and the Ugandan Ministry of Health (MOH) indicate elevated malnutrition rates among children between the ages of 6 and 59 months in Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts. In these three districts, Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates ranged from 13 to 20 percent and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rates ranged from 6 to 9 percent.

From January 8 to 16, representatives of USAID/OFDA and USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) visited Uganda to meet with non-governmental organization (NGO) partners working to address rising malnutrition. They found that the capacity of supplementary feeding programs (SFPs) and therapeutic feeding centers (TFCs) is limited in terms of staffing and facilities, insufficient screening and referrals, and a low level of awareness among affected populations about the importance of the treatment. According to the NGOs, approximately 20 percent of malnourished children under the age of five have access

to SFPs, and 10 percent of severely malnourished children have access to TFCs. Insecurity is the primary reason for low levels of access, and NGOs report that default rates are high among accessible nutritional centers due to ongoing conflict. Less than half of the camps in Gulu and Pader districts and less than a third of the camps in Kitgum District have SFPs.

***IDPs in Teso Region begin to return home.*** On February 17, local GOU officials stated that 20,000 out of 300,000 IDPs in the eastern areas of Teso Region have gone home. The head of UN OCHA in Kampala stated that these IDPs are commuting between Soroti District and their homes before permanently returning. According to the Ugandan Minister of State for Disaster Preparedness, the majority of the 90,000 IDPs living in Soroti District have moved out of the town center. However, NGOs working in Soroti report that many IDPs remain in the town. The minister reported that IDPs represent 36 percent of the population in Soroti District, 34 percent in Katakwi District, and 79 percent in Kaberamaido District. The minister also highlighted the returning IDPs' need for food and agricultural inputs in their home areas.

***Amnesty period reduced for LRA; war crimes investigation underway.*** On January 22, the GOU reduced the amnesty period for members of the LRA from six months to three months and indicated that the amnesty would no longer apply to senior LRA commanders. The GOU had extended the original Amnesty Act for six months on January 16.

On January 29, the prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC) announced the start of an investigation into war crimes committed by the LRA and UPDF in Uganda. LRA crimes include child abductions, executions, torture, rape, forced labor, and mutilation. Human Rights Watch alleges that the UPDF has committed crimes including rape, forced displacement, and the recruitment of children into government militias. The president of Uganda has rejected the charges. The ICC plans to investigate the February 21 attack on Barlonyo camp.

***Repatriation of Rwandan refugees.*** Under an agreement between the GOU, Government of Rwanda, and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 900 Rwandan refugees voluntarily repatriated between January 19 and 23. According to UNHCR, 1,600 refugees out of an estimated 25,000 living in Uganda have registered for voluntary repatriation.

#### **USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

During FY 2003, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$4 million in emergency humanitarian assistance to Uganda. On October 1, 2003, U.S. Ambassador Jimmy

Kolker redeclared a disaster in response to the ongoing complex humanitarian emergency in northern Uganda. To date in FY 2004, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$4 million to support humanitarian programs. USAID/OFDA also provided \$500,000 to UN OCHA to enhance coordination efforts among the humanitarian relief community. USAID/OFDA is also providing nearly \$1.5 million to Action Against Hunger USA (AAH/USA), GOAL, and the International Medical Corps (IMC) for health and nutrition programs, more than \$1 million to International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Medair to improve sanitation conditions and access to potable water, \$500,000 to World Vision International (WVI) for shelter, water, and sanitation programs, and \$461,000 to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) and UNICEF for coordination and food security activities countrywide.

USAID/Uganda's strategic interventions in the northern and western districts of Uganda aim to mitigate the impact of conflict and increase community resilience through humanitarian and relief-to-development assistance. USAID/Uganda's \$12 million Community Resilience and Dialogue activity (2002 through 2007) assists conflict victims, including communities living under the threat of attack, families that have moved to IDP camps, former abductees, and ex-combatants who have received amnesty. To support conflict resolution efforts, USAID/Uganda has launched a new initiative to secure a negotiated settlement with the LRA.

To date in FY 2004, USAID/FFP has provided 38,040 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance valued at more than \$25 million. Commodities provided include maize, corn-soy blend, vegetable oil, and pulses.

The Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) continues to support the humanitarian needs of refugees in Uganda and the region. In FY 2003, State/PRM provided \$3.3 million to UNHCR for general assistance to refugees in Uganda, including environmental and refugee children's programs. State/PRM funding in Uganda also included \$2.4 million to WFP for refugee feeding programs, \$519,889 to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) for refugee self-sufficiency programs, \$259,887 to International Medical Corps (IMC) for the prevention of sexual and gender based violence, and \$170,000 to the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for assistance to Rwandan and Congolese refugees in Uganda. This is in addition to unearmarked FY 2003 funding for UNHCR (\$54.6 million) and ICRC (\$52.6 million) for refugee assistance activities in Africa. FY04 funding decisions are still being made.

## U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
AAH/USA	Nutrition	Gulu	\$500,000
GOAL	Nutrition, Health	Pader	\$299,918
IMC	Health	Pader, Kitgum, Soroti	\$695,000
IRC	Health, Water and Sanitation	Pader, Kitgum, Soroti	\$749,985
MEDAIR	Water and Sanitation, Non-Food Items	Pader	\$273,650
UNFAO	Coordination, Food Security, Agriculture	Countrywide	\$211,000
UNICEF	Health Coordination Funds	Countrywide	\$250,000
UN OCHA	Coordination	Countrywide	\$500,000
WVI	Sanitation, Shelter	Gulu, Kitgum, Soroti	\$500,000
Administrative Costs			\$11,500
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA .....</b>			<b>\$3,991,053</b>
<b>USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE</b>			
WFP <sup>2</sup>	P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance – 38,040 MT	Countrywide	\$24,573,430
<b>TOTAL USAID/FFP .....</b>			<b>\$24,573,430</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2004 .....</b>			<b>\$28,564,483</b>
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2004.....</b>			<b>\$28,564,483</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of March 18, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Estimated value of food assistance.



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